steps taken in pursuance thereof, improvements have been registered in different performance indicators, as summarised below:

Particulars	Unit	1988-89	1989-90
Fleet utilisation	%	86.75	89.04
Operational ratio	%	91.91	93.60
KM efficiency	%	92.27	93.44
B/Downs per 10,000 Kms.	No	1.58	0.82
Accident per 1 lakh Kms.	No	1.49	1.21

(c) There have been certain instances of this nature. There have been standing instructions by DTC, reiterated from time to time, to the drivers that they should park their buses at the bus stands and that they should bring the buses to dead halt for safe alighting and boarding of the passengers. The supervisory staff has been also instructed to take action against the defaulters. During the period from 13th June to 16th August, 1990, there have been 307 cases of wrong parking and the erring drivers have been challaned.

(d) While the well-painted destination boards are displayed on the buses operating on regular routes, there are occasions when on account of dislocation of regular service, the buses are required to be diverted on routes other than the scheduled routes. In such situations, route number and destination board happen to be written in chalk, since the destination boards indicating the route on which the bus has been diverted are not available with the bus crew.

Indians in Saudi Arabian Jails

1650. SHRI THOMAS KUTHIRAVATTOM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indians imprisoned in Saudi Arabian jails and out of that how many are Keralites;

(b) what were the nature of offences committed by these prisoners; and

(c) what steps Government contemplat eto get these prisoners released who are langunishing in Saudi jails?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Casualities of Indian People in Saudi Arabia

1651. SHRI THOMAS KUTHIRAVATTOM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Indian nationals especially Keralites died recently in Saudi Arabia;

(b) whether these deaths are all natural or any foul play involved;

(c) what is the actual cause of the delay in bringing the dead bodies to India; and

(d) whether it was due to non-cooperation of Saudi Government or inaction of our Embassy; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Hardship and Harrassment to the widows for getting Payments of N.S.Cs.

1652 SHRI MOHD. KHALEELUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the great hardship and harrassment caused to the widows, particularly, the Army widows, in the matter of getting payment of National Savings Certificates on their maturity, due to the operation of century-old outmoded and archaic rules and formalities of all sorts of verification relating thereto;

(b) whether the Lajpat Nagar Head Post Office in Delhi is harrassing these widows and despite their fulfilling of all the prescribed formalities delays payment by crossed cheque even when there is hardly any risk involved.

(c) whether despite the matter having been brought to the notice of the Chief Post Master General, New Delhi, and the Senior Supdt. of Post Offices, Golf Links, New Delhi no action has been taken to expedite the settlement of claims; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons therefor and how Government propose to sort out matters once for all?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) No, Sir. The rules regarding payment of NSCs are framed by Government with a view to ensuring maximum convenience to investors at the time of payment. These rules are also subjected to constant review so as to provide better service to the investors.

(b to (d) One complaint in this regard has been received. Expeditious action is being taken to settle the case after due compliance of the prescribed procedure.

Indian Ports Association

1653. SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an organisation in the name of Indian Ports Association is working for co-ordination and consultancy work for all the major ports and as well for the Ministry of Surface Transport; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the work done so far by Indian Ports Association since its inception and what is the number of Officers and employees working therein?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI K. P. UNNIKRISHNAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Ports Association have undertaken important studies/activities in connection with Re-structuring of port tariff and simplification of port procedures, Re-structuring and revision of the wages for port employees, drawing up of phased programme for training of port officers, evolution of frame work for up-grading and optimising the activities of Indian Institute of Port Management, Calcutta and National Institute of Port Management, Madras, publication of quarterly journal 'Indian Ports', setting up of computerised data bank, in-house port consultancy, studies for better utilisation of manpower and other resources in ports, Master Plan study in respect of ports like New Mangalore, Tuticorin, Madras, Visakhapatnam, Paradip and Kandla, workshops seminars at national and international levels, assistacee in the preparation of a perspective plan for the port sector, etc. The total number of officers and, employees working in Indian Ports Association is 57.